

# Book Reviews

## Hands on Health

### Understanding Manual Therapy

Adrian Good & David Tiley, Editors: In press  
(Manuscript only available for review).

**Hands on Health - Understanding manual therapy** is a concise, and easily understood reference for those interested in learning the basics about manual therapy, its practitioners, applications and concepts. The book is divided into seventeen short and lucidly written chapters, covering topics ranging from basic anatomy of the musculoskeletal system to the controversial aspects of this mode of treatment about manual therapy. It is in two parts, the first dealing with the types of therapy, those who practise manual techniques and important aspects of diagnosis and response. The second part deals with specific body areas, discussing in detail signs and symptoms of some of the more common complaints treated by manual therapists.

Perhaps the greatest strength of **Hands on Health - Understanding manual therapy** is the refreshing non-discipline-specific approach taken by the authors. Many books are available extolling the virtues of chiropractic, osteopathy and other professions individually, but few concentrate on promoting manual therapy as a single modality with several branches. Potential patients have the opportunity to learn how may manual therapy help their condition rather than how will a particular discipline. This can only be of benefit to the patient, who is free to compare, contrast and assess various therapeutic approaches to the same condition. Many patients become confused and even disillusioned when faced with the arduous and frightening task of choosing a practitioner to consult about their condition. Few patients know the difference between a chiropractor, an osteopath and a physiotherapist, and when it comes time to decide on the most appropriate, the choice is difficult at best. The information in the first part one of the book arms the patient with the knowledge and understanding necessary

to make an informed decision on the practitioner and style of therapy best suited to their needs.

The second section targets patients who have yet to seek diagnosis of a condition, and those whose health problems are perhaps diagnosed, but either untreated or receiving inadequate or ineffective treatment. Patients can read the commonest symptoms associated with musculoskeletal conditions, and by comparing these to their own, ascertain if manual therapy is a viable treatment option. Examples of conditions discussed are tenosynovitis, RSI, ligament 1 cartilage damage and arthritis. There are suggestions how these conditions may respond to manipulative or other forms of manual treatment, and thus the book serves as a valuable introduction for prospective patients. Conditions are covered in sufficient detail to provide adequate understanding without bombarding the reader with useless facts and figures, and are explained clearly and accurately. The aetiology, pathogenesis and pathology are summarised in easy-to-understand language using lay terminology rather than confusing medical jargon. Consequently, the reader receives a short but concise education in a wide range of common musculoskeletal diseases which are often responsive to manual therapy.

**Hands on Health - Understanding manual therapy** is a useful guide for patients suffering any of the many musculoskeletal health problems afflicting Australians today. By giving a concise account of the muscle, bone, joint and soft-tissue conditions most often encountered, and discussing their treatment with manual therapy, patients reading this book will more fully understand their condition and the methods by which it can be treated.

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